

## EDITORIAL

## SECTION.

## Davenport Declares This Great American Institution Will Soon Be Extinct.

## THE PASSING OF THE STATE FAIR.

Together with the Buffalo and the Dodo, It Will Soon Be but a Memory.



I

I have known farmers and fairs all my life, and I don't believe that the farmers will ever tire of looking over the best the farm produces. From practical experience I know there is no time during the farmer's year when his heart is so light as at State fair week. I recall the days when at the State fair in Oregon, as in every State, the fair was a credit to any nation, let alone any State. Last week I went to Waverly, N. J., to look on at the State fair. I noticed it had taken a drop from what it was the year before, and then I remembered that a difference existed between the Salem, Oregon, and the State fair of New Jersey. In Oregon and other Pacific Slope States the State fair is still a most important event. Still, these exhibitions are not what they used to be.

As I first remember the State fair at Salem, Ore., it was more like the World's Fair than anything I can think of. Families came from all parts of the State and camped on the grounds a week before the show opened. Stock in large herds was driven from far and near, and if a farmer was absent from the fair it was a sure sign of severe sickness or death. All the stall room was filled weeks before, and the tumult of the fair could be heard a week after it was over. As a young boy then I remember I rode for twelve consecutive years on a fat bull to the fair. He took first prize every time, and while the premium only meant \$20, the honor was of greater value than cash. I can still feel the pride that overcame our entire

household when the judges tied the blue ribbon on the bull's tail. Those were great days—days when the three-minute trotter, with the old-fashioned sulky, with the farmer driver, with his duster trailing behind, stirred up more breeze than the horse speeding in two minutes today with the new model sulky. There are other changes, too. The man who then bred common geese and took them to the fair now breeds Mandarin ducks that are too timid to be shown. And the farmer that in those days raised the pumpkin "Nancy Hanks" has his fields and gardens made into golf links. Thus the great State fairs that brought out the skill of the farmers are fading away. Once gone they will never be restored. With them I might say will vanish the pioneers and the unadulterated farmer, who is becoming extinct.



THE PRIZE SHEEP.

Some of the exhibits have improved with time. Today you see greater speed and more pure bred horses of various strains and cattle and sheep of finer quality. But the scarcity of this good stock, together with the absence of the country people, weakens the fair of today. When you hear visitors at a State fair, as I did last week in New Jersey, ask what was the difference between a



THE THREE-MINUTE TROT.

sheep and a goat you know that the fair is not attended by the right kind of people. There is no absolute proof that dumb animals do not understand our language, and for that reason they should be at least treated with respect. And as I say again, when they hear people referring to the thoroughbred Clydesdale and the full blooded running horse, it is time to move the fair grounds further away from the big cities.

In the early days of State fairs every product of the State was exhibited. The judges were chosen among the farmers. The man that judged potatoes was a potato expert, and also a philosopher, a man who is still undecided as to whether it is harder to drop potatoes than to pick 'em up. And the other judges were chosen with a view to their knowledge of what they were to judge. The poultry judge in passing upon a hen asked about her laying ability. If she happened to be an idle hen, the fact that she was registered in Bruce's stud book would not enable her to win a blue ribbon over a working bird. These days in the poultry department of the State fair, the judges are college graduates who have learned

what they know of poultry from the restaurant and the colored catalogues, and if a hen or duck doesn't look like her latest colored lithograph she is disqualified, even if she should lay a double-yolked egg every day.

And so it is with the horses. Twenty years ago in Oregon draught horses were judged by how much they could pull, and carriage horses were driven. The best stoppers always got the prize, whereas now the judge watches the tail, which is the size of a goat's, and must be worn at an angle of 45 degrees. Although the tail cuts little ice except in drizzle, still the short tailed horse beats the long tailed one.

It may be that the absence of the farmer and his exhibits caused the growth of colic on the ticket office window. Who knows? The State fair will soon be a thing of the past if something is not done to bring the farmer and his stock together again.

I asked a gentleman at the Jersey fair last week what was the cause of the decline. He whispered to me that politics got mixed with the fair a few years ago and ever since the dickens

had been to pay.

Politics in the State fair—think of it! When you walk down the stalls looking into the innocent eyes of the cattle, do you see any politics? No; nor do you when you look over the rest of the exhibits. There's no politics in the pumpkins. If there was it would be hollow, but it isn't. Why will the men mix politics in a State fair where the exhibits suffer? In many instances the management is to blame. They let privileges to sure-thing gamblers and turn shell game men loose on the old and young farmers like wolves on a flock of lambs, and as a result the farmer who lost his wealth stayed at home the next season. It is also true that the Government of the United States has allowed the trusts



THE LATEST MOWER.

and monopolies to ride on the farmer until he has but little to cultivate good stock with. The State should offer liberal premiums for even good reams. In that way we could build up the fair to our standard of twenty-five years ago.

It is easy for me to see why Oregon should excel New Jersey in State fairs. Oregon is further away from New York City, and State fairs



HE RODE A BULL.

have no business hobnobbing with city life. They should be as far from each other as a honeymoon and the golden wedding. Pumpkins belong in the country as much as sandwiches belong in town. Can it be that the march of civilization is leaving the farmer and his fair in the back-ground? Will the State fair held in Oregon this month be better than any held hereafter? The truth is, the continuous performances are going the pace that kills, and the operas and State fairs are in the afternoon of their glory. The wheat field with prize wheat to-day may be golf links to-morrow, and thus the time is close at hand when a gift bull will be more sought after than a pumpkin, even by a farmer.

HOMER DAVENPORT.



## ROYALTY HAS TROUBLES OF ITS OWN.

By MARQUISE DE FONTENAY.

WHAT is the matter with the Czar? That is a question which is now being asked at every court and in every diplomatic chancellery of Europe. There seems to be a general impression that his mind has become slightly unbalanced, and his recent peace manifesto, coming at so peculiar a moment, and the terms of which recall so vividly the visionary dreams of that crowned lunatic, King Frederick William IV., of Prussia, is regarded as one of the indications of his unbalanced mental condition.

It is impossible to deny that this rumor concerning Nicholas is to a great extent fostered and propagated by his own subjects, and even by Muscovite Government officials, who, too cautious to venture upon open criticism, nevertheless indulge in smiles, sneers and shrugs of the shoulders that are far more eloquent than mere words. The opinion is very generally expressed that, had the Dowager Czarina been in Russia, the manifesto would never have seen the light of day, not so much because she disapproves of peace, but solely on the ground that the manifesto is so impracticable and untimely that, instead of promoting the cause which it has in view, namely, the maintenance of peace, it is, on the contrary,

calculated to render war more probable and more imminent.

It may be recalled that the young Czar has already once before been taxed with an unbalanced mind, which was said to have given way almost completely two years ago as a result of the shock sustained in connection with the terrible catastrophe entailing the loss of 3,000 lives at Moscow, which marred the festivities in connection with his coronation.

It would not be astonishing if his mind were to give way, since there is a very strongly developed taint of insanity in the blood of the imperial house of Romanoff, and, moreover, he is afflicted with epilepsy, possesses exceedingly high-strung nerves and has never altogether recovered from the terrible blow on the head which he received while in Japan from the fanatic police official who attempted to assassinate him.

Gloom, both somber and depressing, will hover over the courts of the Old World during the forthcoming Winter, and those Americans who go abroad for the sake of witnessing and participating in court festivities and magnificent state functions are likely to be cruelly disappointed.

The Court of Vienna, the most brilliant in the

world, and certainly the most impressive and picturesque in all its grandeur and ceremonial, will be in mourning for the next six months, and a full year will therefore elapse before there can be any festivities in the Kaiserstadt or at Pesti, the aristocracy naturally taking their cue in the matter from the reigning family.

The death of the Queen of Denmark, too, is imminent, and that will put into mourning the family of the Princess of Wales, as well as the reigning houses of Greece, Russia and Sweden, besides, of course, that of Denmark and Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The case of Denmark's Queen, in fact, is so hopeless that her daughter, the Czarina, at the very last moment decided Wednesday to abandon her intention of returning to Russia in time to take part in the grand ceremony of dedication of the Alexander memorial at Moscow and to remain at Copenhagen till the end.

The young Czarina is expected to become a mother early in the new year, and to present her husband and the nation with a long and anxiously expected heir to the throne, and this in itself would constitute a reason for the abandonment of all festivities at the Court of St. Petersburg during the coming Winter.

## A SOLAR PLEXUS FOR THE MUSIC HALLS.

By CURTIS DUNHAM.

HOW are the big, costly music halls, burdened with enormous rentals and boards of directors, going to counteract the influence of bargain-counter methods?

Oscar Hammerstein, finding no answer to this question, put up the shutter of Olympia. He had no choice in the matter. The orderly, economical, mercantile John Wanamaker spirit, no less triumphant in the management of vaudeville than in the dissemination of staple and fancy dry goods, has landed a solar plexus blow on the old music hall system. It is becoming more and more apparent that the public cannot resist bargain counters. And when the continuous performances—the bargain counter of the theatrical industry—offers talent as tempting as the market affords, where can the old emporium, with its high prices and its high art ideals, look for salvation?

To be sure, you cannot smoke, and drink at Keith's and Proctor's, any more than you can at Wanamaker's. But Oscar Hammerstein's invitation to his patrons to make themselves comfortable with his high-priced Havanas and cocktails failed to reconcile them to the absence of bargain counter advantages.

Alfred E. Arons, the experienced and wide-awake manager of Koster & Bial's, admits that the only hope for that institution—the sole remaining rebuke to Mr. Wanamaker—is to provide

its patrons with sensational European novelties that are beyond the reach of the bargain counters or beyond the sale of their policy. Acting upon that theory, he has recently thrown his searchlight on all the European vaudeville centres—with what result we are informed that we shall see during the Winter. It is a significant fact, however, that all the European music hall novelties which have been successful here had acquired world-wide celebrity long before their appearance in America. And note how short is the list: Yvette Guilbert, Lottie Collins, Anna Held, Lottie Lind, Chevalier, Cleo de Merode. Who else in half a dozen years—except Lole Fuller, an American girl, who had to go to Paris for appreciation?

Each season usually develops a music hall accident that helps keep the old system alive—for accidents do not enter into the Wanamaker philosophy. Hammerstein was able by means of his "Silly Dinner" to draw one long financial breath, and last season Mr. Arons discovered Charnion.

This disarming opportunity, however, was doomed to bloom but once for large music hall crowds. Why pay a dollar and a half to see a lady undress brazenly, without reason either in the name of art or poetry, when the act is so easily made the doubly thrilling climax of drama—the reflection of real life—in Paris? Charnion was a not inappreciable accompaniment to gin

fix and tobacco smoke, and for a time it looked as though here was something that the big music hall could call its very own. The bargain counters could not display it to their customers. But no sooner does Mr. Zieffoff see Charnion throw her garters into the bald-headed row than he starts for Paris, knowing that there no possibility respecting garters escapes. He comes back with "The Turtle," and the bargain counter has a new ally.

The bargain counters do not deal in original plays to any great extent. Neither do they produce burlesques. The Wanamaker aphorism of "quick sales and small profits" bars out goods that are cumbersome, as it improves all tendency toward speculation. So there remains only the burlesque—in spite of Charles Frohman's threat to serve drinks to his patrons if the music halls peach on his dramatic preserves. Last Spring Koster & Bial's put on "Cook's Tour," and by engaging for the cast people who are personally popular it was fairly successful. The experiment will be repeated shortly, though with the disadvantage that the house has identified with it no carefully selected and capable stock company, such as has made the fortune of a rival establishment.

There is renewed talk of English syndicate ambitions, not only to acquire Koster & Bial's, but to revive Olympia. It is not noticeable that such talk creates the slightest consternation in the neighborhood of the bargain counters.

## McDougall Picks Out Our Piscatorial Progenitors.

## OUR EVOLUTIONARY ANCESTORS.

The Aquarium Is Rich in Prototypes of Public Characters.

THAT Man has descended through various forms of animal life from the fishes of the Devonian epoch has been amply proved by the scientist. It remains for the physiologist to develop the same fact from the facial resemblance of surviving fishes to modern every-day types of mankind.

A visit to the Aquarium, at the Battery, demonstrates some surprising features. The nomenclature of the fishes there exhibited is in most cases meaningless. The "Puffer" certainly suggests the classic features of the Gruber.

what misleading at the outset. One has to divest himself of the idea that the name describes the fish, for, as a general thing, the funny subject doesn't fit his name at all. That the angel fish, for instance, suggests an angel, is poetic license, and the name "grunt" or "spade fish," certainly conveys no meaning whatever. It is in their physiognomy that one finds food for serious, grave reflection, for there we see, the prototypes of mankind, daily renewed, and needing careful scrutiny and some imagination also, but enough to show us what we were in the dim, remote ages. Yet the likenesses are there, and they grow on one most

strangely. Sometimes, but rarely, the entire bodily structure of the inhabitant of a tank conforms to this idea of a human resemblance, but the portraiture is generally in the face of a fish only.

I fancy I can see in the gold fish the sleek, smooth features of the rich banker and multi-millionaire. In his self-contained yet cold face there is a dim resemblance to D. O. Mills, which is only belied by the sluggish movements of the fish. The gold fish has all of the proud, reserved air of a bloated aristocrat, and is as thoroughly satisfied, apparently, with the little circle he swims in as a Newport villa owner.

In that stranded outflow of the vasty deep (four fathoms deep as a general thing), the Sea Robin, I see the public speaker—or mayhap the accuser—as he crawls on the bottom of his tank and opens his mouth, so open-mouthed that one can see his good works, pants the hours away. He claws nervously and feverishly at the gravel with his imitation legs, and as I gazed at him I recalled Talmage at his best. It is a long cry from a sea robin to the great lecturer, but

science has proved things that at first seemed more miraculous and Talmage certainly exhibits the sea robin style of mouth when he grows earnest and eloquent.

We now pass to the Trigger fish (another freak of nomenclature), a Bermuda exhibit, whose snagg, complacent face, unmarked by lines of care or thought, whose concealed air of self-sufficiency and self-asserted leadership instantly recalled Mr. Bailey, of Texas, to my mind, only I think that Bailey's eye is less human and intelligent. This fish had a manner, a real decided air of being the smartest fish in the tank, which the sole occupant. You can seek for emotional expression in a fish's face. The expression, whether sad, morose or indifferent, is fixed for the term of his existence, and is only varied by an occasional yawn of ennui. It is generally stolid, cold and devoid of all feeling what-ever, and ingersoll.

They call it the angel fish, but it looks like "BOB" ever, and ingersoll. These of his wriggles and bodily contortions are reflected in his features. No one, no matter how fond or observant, ever detects a look of gratitude or affection in the cold eye of a fish, nor observes

a humorous or tender expression play around a fish's mouth. His expression is "set" and is unchangeable.

Tropical fish show the most varied and human features.

It is among them we find also the strangest, most striking shapes and colors, but this is not an invariable rule. To be exact is to be scientific, and in being exact we discover that there is an exception to the rule in the head of the common catfish, or "bullhead," of commerce. There we detect a faint resemblance to the Mongolian branch of the human family, a sort of Li Hung Chang countenance, which needs little to make it a perfect likeness.

In the Hybrid Trout, a pugnacious and determined fighter, a swift leaper with a ferocious appetite, we discover all the marks of the pugilist, the retreating forehead, advanced jaw, sullen expression, and a multitude of freckles that complete a most striking likeness to the present champion.

The Moon fish, a purely ethereal looking creature, no thicker than a restaurant buckwheat cake, but with a fluorescent, moonlight-on-the-lake color, a spectral, unnatural tinge, fitted to and fro nervously but self-consciously in the centre of the stage—I mean tank—as if courting yet avoiding publicity.

A girl near me remarked in an ecstatic tone: "How strangely beautiful—how like John Dwyer!" This shows that I am not alone in imagining these likenesses exist. I took the liberty of inquiring if she thought the angel fish resembled Bob Ingersoll.

After a careful scrutiny she said: "It's sort of like him, but I think that they oughtn't to call it an angel fish." This fish has the plain but impressive features of a great apostle and the habit of pursuing up its mouth just as he does when he is about to emit a bon mot or a caustic piece of repartee.

The "Puffer" is a small but energetic marine curio, which brings Abe Gruber's classic features into mind as soon as seen. In habits the two are extremely different, the fish having a marked partiality and preference for water.

Near him, lazily circling in his special tank, is the spade fish, a deep-sea replica of Steve Brodie, eyeing each beholder with a dull but scornful look as if demanding instant acquiescence in the belief that he really did jump. The spade fish (oh, why is he called thus?) has a bowery face and Waiwaila Hall mannerisms that mark him as one of the early pioneer types of piscine creation.

THIS WOULD CONVINCE ANY ONE THAT HANNA EVOLVED FROM A TRUNK FISH.

But the gem, the star of all, is the Trunk fish, a three-cornered, indigestible looking creature, whose Hanna-like physiognomy is startling and memorable. It is a strange combination, a subtle mingling of ferocity and good humor, of gummyraptures and gentle bonhomie that fascinates the student of the sea.

It's NOT SUCH A FAR CRY FROM THE SEA ROBIN TO THE REV. MAUNDER SAID: T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

izes how ugly or how beautiful a face is until one has begun to draw it." This is so true! In drawing the trunk fish—he is more like a valise or a shape—I became aware that the absence of hirate decoration somewhat affects the resemblance, but this is made up by the side fins, which give the effect of Mark's queer brand of "sideboards." If this fish could raise whiskers he undoubtedly would endeavor to add to his startling appearance by just such things as Hanna sports.

The whole air of this funny freak on general view is that of one who doesn't give up anything he has once laid his hands on, as Texas, but just a plain trig-it were, and GER FISH.

But I say to all real students of human nature and fish, go to the Aquarium and study these things for yourself. The subject is well worthy of more time and attention than Haeckel and I have given it, and I humbly but earnestly present it to the attention of ichthyologists as a new and fertile field of study.

WALD MCDUGALL.